

A Witness To Truth

"The reason I was born and came into this world was to be a witness to truth. Everyone who is searching for truth will turn to my words and hear them" John 18; 37b. Jesus spoke these words the night before He suffered the most horrendous death imaginable. It caused me to repent when I realized He suffered this death for my sake, and for the sake of all those who put their faith in Him and His words.

The Lord has been prompting me for some time to put my personal journey down in writing. I don't know how much time I have left, but I would like to leave the account of my journey for future generations to come. Jesus said: *"Small is the gate and narrow the path that leads to life, and only a few find it"* Matthew 7, 14. My prayer is that some will be encouraged to search for that narrow path because of what I have written here. This is about how God lead me to His Word, and through His Word I found the narrow path. Actually, His Word is that path. Along that path He has revealed Himself, and is still revealing Himself to me every day. We have an account of Jesus asking his disciples: *"Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* Jesus replied, *"Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven."* Matthew 16; 15-17

The night before Jesus was murdered, He prayed to His Father in heaven, and He said these words: *"This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent"* John 17; 3. The only way anyone can truly know God and his Son Jesus, is if He reveals Himself to them through His Word. Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, *"I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."* Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, *"Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."* Luke 10; 21-24

My Journey

I was given the name Arthur James Phillips on August, 19 1952. My father was half black, my mom was Caucasian. Now days mixed marriages are fairly common, but back then they were very rare, so rare in fact I never knew, saw, or even heard of another person with mixed blood like myself except for my siblings. As a kid, I was self conscious about it and I always felt inferior to other people. I was never treated inferior, I just felt that way inside. I had an older brother who was killed in a private airplane crash. I still have an older and a younger sister. My father and mother have both passed away.

My mom was a very loving, Godly woman. She took us children to a home church (they called it meeting) every Sunday morning. We also went to gospel meetings on Sunday afternoons whenever they were held in town. We also attended Wednesday night bible study every week. Once a year special meetings were held on a scheduled Sunday. At those special meetings, two services were held, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. We always attended them. We also attended annual church conventions. These were four day events with three meetings each day. These conventions were held in different cities in almost every state. If I could get a ride with someone, I would go to a convention in other towns or even in other states. I really enjoyed going to these conventions, not so much to listen to the preaching, but to meet and visit with friends I had not seen for a year or more. There were two hour intervals between meetings, so there was a lot of time for visiting.

I became a member of the church at age 11. There was nothing to sign, but I just stood up in meeting when the preacher (we called them workers) asked if there was any one there who would accept this way of faith. I was not pressured into making this decision, but I went along with the usual timing of most of the other young people who attended that church. My older brother became a member at about the age of 11 also. I was baptized in water the next year at the age of 12.

When a person becomes a member of that church, they are expected to take a “part” in Sunday morning meetings and Wednesday night bible studies. Their “part” consisted of standing up during the meetings and giving a brief testimony. During the time of prayer each member in turn said a prayer. At the end of the Sunday morning meeting each member took communion. They passed around a glass of grape juice and a slice of bread after the elder (usually the home owner) said a prayer for each. The Sunday morning and Wednesday night meetings were held in different homes around town. The head worker decided which members would have meetings in their home. It was always considered to be a real privilege and an honor to be one of the ones chosen to have meetings in their home.

After I became a member I did read my bible (King James Version) every week. I read it, not out of a need I felt to know God better, but out of a compulsion I had to have something to say on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights. My testimony usually consisted of using a story, a parable, or a lesson of Jesus or of one of His disciples, or one of the prophets. I would quote the story and use that as an example of how I desired to change and become a more godly and better person. My bible reading usually took place on Saturday night, or Sunday morning before meeting, and Wednesday night right before bible study. With all of the many hours of preaching I listened to throughout all my growing up years, and all of the bible reading I did, God never became real to me.

When I became older, I started looking around, and I saw that there are many other denominations and religious beliefs in the world. I saw that there were over four thousand Christian denominations alone, and they were reading from the same bible I was reading. I considered that the reason there are so many denominations is people like to follow other people, they are like sheep. All it takes is for one person with a lot of charisma to tell other people “it means this” and soon he will have a crowd of followers. I wondered how I would sort it all out? I had no clue.

When I had reached my early to late teens, I had become agnostic in my belief. What I mean by agnostic is that I could not say with certainty there was a god, and I could not say with certainty there was not a god, but I could say with certainty that I didn't know for sure either way. I was also certain that I was real and that I had a real need to love and to be loved.

After I turned 17, I started dating a girl. We had intercourse even though we were not married, and she became pregnant. Later, we did get married and we had a baby boy. When I got married I really did expect that our marriage would last the rest of my life, until one of us died. But not even a year after we got married, I was devastated to find out that my wife was having sexual relations with someone else. What made it worse for me is that not only did I know the person she was with, but I had loved and trusted that person as well. I felt doubly betrayed. I felt that everything I was working toward and living for was wasted. All I could think to do was to just get away from it all. I left my wife and my little boy to stay with my mom, put a few things into my little car and headed out to southern California from Colorado. I found a job in California and rented an apartment a few miles from the beach. I am thinking that must have been around 1971 or 1972.

I loved going to the beach and I went there almost every night after work and on weekends too. While I

was there I would just sit in the sand, and many times I would cry. Even though people were all around me, I felt so lonely and alone. I did a lot of thinking there too. I thought about my life up to that time, and I thought and wondered about what my life would be like in the future. I still remember a simple poem I wrote on the back of a notebook I had. I wrote: "Here I sit watching this beautiful sunset fade into the western sky and die, I just ask why? I wonder if anyone will care enough to ask why when I fade and die?"

One of the things I thought about while sitting there was the first memory I ever had of my existence. I was probably only an infant, but I could remember my mom hugging me and kissing me, and the feeling of joy and the elation I felt inside just to be loved. I think everyone on earth has felt this kind of love at some time in their life. Even the worst, most hardened criminals have at some time felt this kind of love. I longed to have that joy inside of me again.

By stark contrast, I knew what it felt like to hate, and have hate inside of me. At that time I had hate for the person who had relations with my wife. I wanted him to die. I would have killed him myself if I thought I could get away with it. I felt anguish and turmoil with this hate living inside of me. I thought about the turmoil and horrible anguish a person must have inside of them when they hate so much they are actually willing to take the life of another person, or the torment one has inside before taking their own life. I did not want to always feel this turmoil inside, but how could I escape from it? I reasoned that the only way I could escape the turmoil of hate I had inside would be to replace it with love. But what was this love? Where could I find it? Once I found it, how could I obtain it and keep it inside of me? So I started a quest to find out more about this love I wanted. Little did I know at that time that it would take 6 long years to finally find it.

I went to numerous libraries and book stores and read many books about love. I read self help books, like "I'm okay your okay" and many other books of that nature. But I found out that all of them were about learning how to love yourself and finding out who you really are, or about personal relationships with other people, or about sexual relationships, as they call it "making love". I knew this was not the kind of love I was looking for. I knew the love I was searching for came from within, like a water spring constantly welling up. This love could stand alone, it did not need to be prompted by another person in order to exist. This love was genuine; I knew because I had experienced it and I wanted more than anything to feel this joy inside again.

I saw this love demonstrated by my mom. Even though she suffered from a slow, progressive, painful and debilitating muscular dystrophy (it ultimately killed her), she remained joyful. She truly loved others and did what ever was in her power to help other people. She also showed mercy for other people. When I was growing up, we lived in a poor neighborhood by the train tracks. There were many times when the hobo's who rode the freight cars would get off tired and hungry, walk to our house asking for food. My mom never turned them away still hungry.

After living in California for about a year, I moved back to Colorado. I took my wife and my son (they had been living with my mom and dad while I was in California), moved to the mountains of Colorado and started a small business. A short time after moving back, my son and I went to church. When we returned home, my neighbor told me he saw a man come and pick up my wife. I didn't hear from her again for two weeks. We eventually got a divorce and I was a single dad for the next 5 years, until I met and married my present wife.

In 1978 I noticed a book that one of my employees had, it's title read "Diaglott". I asked him what the book was about. He explained that it was the new testament of the bible written with two parallel

columns on each page. The left column had the original Greek word with the equivalent English word directly underneath it. The right column had a newer English translation of what the left column said. I never knew anything like this existed and I was very intrigued by it. I asked him if I could take it home and read it and he consented to let me borrow it.

When I got home that night, I thought about all the times I had read in the bible and never gleaned an understanding from it. It had made very little impact on my life. Also, I thought about all the different Christian denominations in the world (well over 4000). They all use this one book, they all claim to understand what this book says, but yet they all come out with different interpretations as to what the book says. I considered why this was so. I reasoned that it was because people are basically like sheep, loving to follow other people. They rely on other people for their understanding.

I was still agnostic in my belief about God, but my logic told me I should try something different this time. I reasoned that if God was real, if He (like I had been taught) actually created the universe, He had to have an immense amount of power; plenty enough power to give me an understanding of His book... if in fact this was His book; after all, why would He have gone through so much trouble to have it written if no one could get a true understanding from it?

I decided this time I would pray to God and ask Him for understanding. I also decided I would start at the beginning and read it like a novel. My thought was how could a person read and understand a huge novel if they were to start reading it in the middle, skip to the end, and then all around. Even if they were to eventually read the whole book, they would not get a very good understanding of the story. Finally I thought, what would it benefit God if He were to give me an understanding without it changing my life and making me be obedient to His instructions?

Taking all that into consideration, my prayer to Him that night went something like this: "Dear God. If you are real, and if this is your Word given to mankind, I want to be able to understand it. I know that if you had enough power to create the entire universe, you will have enough power to give me understanding of your Word. What's more God, if you give me understanding, I promise I will do my best to obey you as you give me an understanding of your instructions".

I began reading from the beginning of the new testament. I read slowly and deliberately, soaking up and internalizing what I was reading. It was like I was reading it for the first time, even though I had read the same passages many times before. But this time the Spirit of God began to open up my eyes, my ears and my heart. I began to see, hear and understand what was written there.

The first instructions I received from God came in the third chapter of Matthew. He told me about the water baptism of John where John says: "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.*" Matthew 3; 2. His was "*A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him'*" Matthew 3; 3b. I knew He was speaking directly to me. I promptly knelt down with tears streaming down my face, I told God I was truly sorry for all the many sins I had committed. I had an attitude of repentance.

As I continued to read, I learned to put myself into the picture as if I were there, and He was speaking directly to me. When He gave the sermon on the mountainside, I was one of those in the crowd to whom He was teaching.

God clearly made known to me why I was receiving an understanding then, when I had never received it before when I read the bible. Jesus said "*Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find;*

knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened". Matthew 7; 7-8. I realized that this was the first time I had asked God for understanding. Always before I expected to get my understanding from other people. I continued to read the new testament every day, and every day I started where I had left off the day before, and every day God was revealing more and more of His truth to me.

It may have been only a few days, or maybe a week or so after I started reading, but I remember reading the account of one of the blind men that Jesus healed. Suddenly, I became that blind man sitting on the side of the road. I begged Jesus to heal me, I told him "I want to see." He healed me that night. He immersed me with His Holy Spirit that night. I recalled where John the Baptist testified about Him: *"After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I immerse you in water, but he will immerse you in the Holy Spirit."* Mark 1; 7b-8. That night, the blood from the Son of God, (that perfect lamb of God) was used on my life to cleanse my soul from every past sin I ever committed. I died to the bonds of my physical nature that night and my spirit was given a new birth within me. I understood what Jesus was talking about when He told Nicodemus: *"I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."* *"How can a man be born when he is old?"* Nicodemus asked. *"Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"* Jesus answered, *"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water (water of the womb) and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'* John 3; 5-7. That night was August 7, 1978.

After that, I continued to read and pray every morning, and every day I was filled with His Holy Spirit and filled with joy. It is the same joy I felt when my mom used to hug me, but this time it was my spiritual Father showing His love for me. This is confirmed by the apostle John when he wrote in one of his letters: *"We know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him".* 1st John 4;16. Jesus testified about His Father: *"God is Spirit"* John 4; 24. So God revealed to me through His Word that God is the Spirit of love. This was the love I started searching for sitting on the beach six years earlier, but at that time I did not know that what I was actually searching for was God.

Now that I know that God is Love, I want to continue in His love. I want to experience the joy of having Him fill me every day of my life with His Holy Spirit. My wife Kathy, wants that for her life also. We accomplish this by getting up extra early every morning and ask Him for more understanding as we read (eat) His Word. We praise Him for the new spiritual life He has given us. We praise Him for His Word He has left for us to follow. We realize He sacrificed and suffered so much for His word to be given to us. It cost Him the lives of every one of His servants who contributed to writing it. We praise Him for His Holy Spirit who teaches us from His Word. We praise Him for the new day ahead, and ask Him to lead and guide us through the day and to keep us safe from the evil one.

The Manifestation Of His Revelations

Since 1978, there have been so many marvelous truth's God has revealed to me through His Word. It is only through God's word that He reveals Himself and His plan of salvation to us. *When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.* Matthew 16; 14-17. His Word can not be

revealed through the words of other men, except by the words of His prophets and apostles whom He spoke to thousands of years ago. Their words have been written down and recorded for us to read. I want to disclose several of these revelations, but first I want to explain how these revelations were made known to me and how they are still given to me today.

Some of His revelations were given all at once; like turning on a light in a dark room. The apostle Peter put it this way: *"It is like a dim light glowing in a dark place until the day light dawns and the morning star rises to illuminate your mind."* *2nd Peter 1; 19b*. But Peter went on to warn us not to use our own intellect to try to understand these things, but to wait on the Holy Spirit to reveal them to us. Peter writes: *"Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were compelled by the Holy Spirit."* *2nd Peter 1; 20-21*. So just as the Holy Spirit was in the prophets and the apostles, compelling them what to say and write, that same Holy Spirit must also be in us to give us an understanding of what they wrote.

I was taught by the Spirit, not to rely on my own understanding but to wait on the Spirit for a revelation from God. He encourages us to: *Trust in the LORD with all our heart and lean not on our own understanding.* *Proverbs 3;5*. This is so important, because we must realize that all our thinking is governed by our physical mind, but if we are willing to let the Holy Spirit reveal truth to us, it cancels out our own physical disabilities and prejudices. God spoke through the Prophet Isaiah and said: *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.* *"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater; so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.* *Isaiah 55; 8-11*.

Most of His revelations were (and still are) given to me in bits and pieces, like the small pieces of a very large jigsaw puzzle. This is where God gives me a bit of understanding, but it doesn't fit anywhere in the overall picture yet. Then I take that bit and meditate on it, I put it aside, sometimes for weeks, months, or even years, but I try to keep it in mind until through my reading, God clearly shows me where the piece fits. When God shows me where the piece fits, I know it is from God because it is a perfect fit, and could not be put in any other place. As time goes by, more pieces are found and put into place and more of the picture of God and His perfect plan is revealed to me. However, the puzzle is not nearly complete yet. There is still so much more I would like to know and understand but one day when I am no longer being constrained by this physical mind and body, I will see Him and know Him perfectly as He really is.

All Mankind Is Spirit

I think the most basic revelation I received from God is that all mankind is actually spirit. This is the most basic, but it is also the most comprehensive and the hardest to truly understand and believe. This is because when we look at a reflection of our self in a mirror, we only see our physical body. We can not see our soul or our spirit within us.

In Genesis 1. God tells us how He created the universe and he went on to tell us about creating mankind; *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."* *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created*

him; male and female he created them. Genesis 1; 26-27. That we were created “In His image” does not mean that God has physical hands and feet and a physical body like ours, but it means that we are actually spirit like He is. Remember; “*God is spirit*” *John 4; 24.*

We are spirit but until we become aware of it, our spirit is asleep. It is like a seed lying dormant that has not been planted and germinated. That which most people think of as being their real self, (their physical body heart and mind) is only temporary, it will one day die and pass away therefore, it is not our real self. Our spirit that God put within our physical bodies has the potential to live forever therefore that spirit is our real self.

Peter tells us that our physical body is like a temporary tent: *I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. 2nd Peter 1; 13-14.* Paul also wrote about our physical bodies as a temporary tent. *Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 2nd Corinthians 5; 1-4.*

Until I became aware of this truth, I believed that what I could see with my eyes, touch with my hands and perceive with my physical senses were the only things that were actually real. But as I yielded my mind to what God is teaching in His word, I became aware of the spiritual realm He has created. My spirit lying dormant within my body awakened and it became alive. Again, this is exactly what Jesus was talking about when He told Nicodemus: “*I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.*” “*How can a man be born when he is old?*” Nicodemus asked. “*Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!*” Jesus answered, “*I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water (water of the womb) and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’*” *John 3; 5-7.* Our spirit birth takes place when He immerses us in His Holy Spirit just as John the Baptist testified: *I immerse you in water, but he will immerse you in the Holy Spirit.*” *Mark 1; 8.*

Physical Realm
VS
Spiritual Realm

God has revealed to me that His spiritual realm is not like the physical realm we see all around us because this physical realm is only temporary, but the spiritual realm will last forever as Paul reminds us: *So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.* 2nd *Corinthians 4; 18.*

Now just because God has planned to one day demolish every physical thing He has created does not mean that His physical creation was, or is bad. On the contrary, when God gives the account of His creation in Genesis, It says “*God saw all that he had made and it was very good*” *Genesis 1; 31a.* But mankind has corrupted his creation throughout the ages. In Revelation Jesus tells us one of the ways we will be judged at the judgment of God: *The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great—and for destroying those who destroy the earth.*” *Revelation 11; 18.* God has put us in charge of his physical creation to love it and take care of it. To love and respect it's awesome beauty. Not taking out of it more than we are willing put back into it, even with the knowledge that it will all one day pass away. In the

same way, we are to love and respect our physical bodies, keeping them clean from physical dirt and from the negative spiritual filth that has infiltrated our world and is taking over all of God's wonderful physical creation. God also intended for us to love and respect each other as well as ourselves, this is written in God's law: *"Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself"*. Leviticus 19;18. Paul writes about this commandment in his letter to the Romans: *Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself."* *Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.* Romans 13; 8-10.

We have a written record where in the past, thousands of years ago, the human race became so wicked that God decided to destroy every living thing He created except for the one good man, Noah and his family and the animals he took with him on the ark: *The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them."* But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God. Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. Genesis 6; 5-13.

Noah's flood was thousands of years ago and we can see that the earth is again filled with violence and has become corrupt. This is why God is planning to once again wipe out this physical creation and replace it with His perfect, spiritual creation. His spiritual creation will last forever. Peter makes this point when he wrote: *You must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."* But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. 2nd Peter 3; 3-13.

The apostle John saw a vision of this new spiritual creation and wrote the vision down for us: *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and*

God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” Revelation 21; 1-5

Body Soul And Spirit

God has revealed to me that as long as we are living in this physical realm, our body soul and spirit are one, and cannot be physically separated until the death of our physical body, but we must learn to recognize the difference. God has intended for His Word to be a gateway between the physical and the spiritual realms so that we can discern all of this while our spirits are still dwelling in our physical body. The writer of Hebrews tells us: *“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.” Hebrews 4; 12-13.* The division of the soul and spirit is the spiritual side of us, and the joints and marrow is our physical side. Our physical body is the temporary dwelling place for our eternal soul, our soul is our spiritual body and the dwelling place for our spirit. Our spirit is us, it is literally who we are. When our physical body is either killed or we die a natural death, our soul and spirit leave our body, just as James tells us: *“The body without the spirit is dead” James 2; 26a.*

Only through God's Word revealed to us by the Holy Spirit will we be able to learn the truth about the spiritual realm. Jesus told His disciples almost 2000 years ago the day before He was crucified: *when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. John 16; 13-14.* Jesus likens the Holy Spirit to physical water: *On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. John 7; 37-39.*

Now, almost 2000 years later, that same living water of His Spirit is available to anyone who asks for it in spirit and in truth. When Jesus tired from His journey sat down by the well and asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water: *The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” “Sir,” the woman said, “you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?” Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” John 4; 9-13.* May all God's people mature and grow to know the difference between the temporary physical water of this earth and the eternal spiritual water flowing out of His Holy Spirit. Remember, John the Baptist immersed the people in physical water, Jesus will immerse us in the eternal spiritual water of his Holy Spirit.

Positive Powers VS Negative Powers

Mankind has discovered the super powerful energy of the positive and negative forces in our physical universe. We have learned that all the stars, our own sun, our planet and all the planets in our solar system hold their place in the sky with these physical, magnetic powers. We do not see these powers with our eyes, but we know they exist because we can observe the result of this power in our every day lives. Mankind has discovered how to harness this power in many ways to use it for our benefit. The discovery of electricity is just one example.

God has revealed to me that just as the physical realm has the powers of positive and negative energies in it, the spiritual realm also has in it the forces of positive and negative power. We do not see these powers with our eyes, but we know they exist because we can witness the result of these powers in our every day lives. Think about the spiritual positive power of love and the physical emotion that is a result of it, like the love a man has for a woman or a mother has for her child and the emotion of peace and joy we feel inside when we possess love. Life in its fullness is the result of love. On the flip side, think about the spiritual negative power of hate and the physical consequence that is a result when we harbor hate within us. Hate living inside a person can lead to the murder of another person, and it also carries with it the emotion of turmoil, anguish and depression. Death is the eventual result of hate. God is the ultimate positive spiritual power of love, truth, light (which is spiritual understanding) and life. The devil is the ultimate negative spiritual power of hate, lies, darkness (which is a lack of spiritual understanding) and death.

Jesus accused the religious leaders in his day of hypocrisy when on the outside they acted like good religious men, but inwardly they hated him and were looking for a way to kill Him. He knew they were looking for a way to kill Him when He said to them: *You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:44.*

Adam & Eve would have lived forever if they would have obeyed God's command instead of believing the devil's lie. They had with them in the garden of Eden the tree of life which they were permitted to eat from: *Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Genesis 2: 8-9.* The only tree they were not permitted to eat from was the tree of the knowledge of good & evil: *The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." Genesis 2: 15-17.*

The devil (taking on the likeness of a serpent), lied to Adam and Eve when he told them: "You will not surely die," *the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Genesis 3: 4-6.*

Because of their disobedience and their belief in the lies of the devil, death was introduced into this

physical realm: *And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.* Genesis 3; 22-24.

It is because they ate from the forbidden tree that we all have the knowledge of good and evil within us this knowledge is our conscience. The conscience of most people condemns them when they do acts of evil just as Cain's conscience condemned him when he killed his brother Abel. One of the ways God will judge each one of us will be whether or not our conscience condemns us. He will hold people blameless if they are truly blind and ignorant of His will. Jesus makes this point clear when he says: *“For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.” Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?” Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.* John 9; 39-41.

Physical Nature VS Spiritual Nature Or Flesh VS Spirit

Before I realized I was actually spirit, my physical nature (flesh) was in total control of my physical body. It was in my physical nature to turn to evil in order to gratify the desires of my flesh. When I wanted something for myself, I lied to others, cheated others and hurt other people in order to satisfy my desires. We can witness this by putting several children in a room with a bunch of toys. The aggressive children will grab the toys of another child, even if they have their own toys. They will shove and push, hit and sometimes bite and really hurt the other children in order to get what they want. They do not have to be taught this behavior, this is the behavior of our lower physical nature. In fact the child has to be taught by their parents or others not to behave in this way. If they grow up not being taught or knowing better, they will be overcome by evil to attain their physical desires. The devil knows the tendency of our physical nature and he capitalizes on this tendency, and tempts us into evil behaviors. James makes this point when he wrote: *When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.* James 1; 13-15.

In Paul's letter to the Galatians, he contrasted our physical nature to the spiritual nature we are given after we are immersed by His Holy Spirit: *So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.* Galatians 5; 16-25.

Again, in Paul's letter to the Colossians, he says the same thing, but writes it in a different way when he said: *"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator"*. *Colossians 3: 5-10.*

The Progression of Knowledge Both Physical and Spiritual Knowledge

From the very beginning mankind has progressed in knowledge left by the accumulated knowledge from previous generations before him. We took what they knew, applied it to new discoveries and inventions of our own, and built on that foundation of knowledge. I have witnessed in my own generation and in the few previous generations before mine, an unprecedented increase in the knowledge of mankind about the physical world and universe we live in. This process of learning has taken thousands and thousands of years, but this is how God created us to learn and progress in our physical realm. If we look at only the span of one person's life time, we see a progression of mental and physical growth and learning taking place, but it takes place in a much more condensed period of time. God has revealed to me that in much the same way, He has planned for us to learn about Himself and His spiritual plan of salvation by us taking what men learned about Him in the past and build on that foundation of knowledge. God has left for us (in his Word) a clear record of the success and failures of mankind going back thousands of years so that we can learn about His nature, so that we can know Him and learn about the spiritual realm and His perfect plan of salvation for our own personal life. God has revealed to me that thousands of years ago when He first began to deal with mankind and make Himself known to them, He dealt with them on a purely physical level, even though He Himself was spiritual. God gave them covenants (promises) and along with those covenants, God gave them instructions that He expected them to obey. These covenants were physical covenants but each covenant came with a spiritual significance and meaning. The instructions God gave were to be obeyed and carried out in a physical manner, but again, each commandment had a spiritual significance and meaning. God did this because everyone then and now starts their life out only perceiving the physical realm. He knew at that early stage of dealing with mankind that men could only truly understand physical things. Only things that he could see with his eyes, hear with his ears, feel with his hands and perceive with his physical senses.

God has revealed to me that through these physical covenants and instructions, He wanted men to perceive the spiritual significance of them and to internally acknowledge Him, to realize His power and worship Him and obey Him as their creator and the creator of the universe. The problem came when people did not comprehend the spiritual significance of what God's instructions to them really were. His instructions and commands to them became physical traditions and rituals, it did not change their wicked hearts. Because of this, God announced through his prophets that he later would introduce a new covenant with mankind. His new covenant would not be a physical covenant like all the past covenants, but it would be a new spiritual covenant: *"The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,"* declares the LORD. *"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,"* declares the LORD. *"I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know*

me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” Jeremiah 31: 31-34

Physical Covenants Called For A Physical Worship

The first covenant God made with men, was made to Noah. *I am going to bring floodwater's on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.” Noah did everything just as God commanded him. The LORD then said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and your whole family, because I have found you righteous in this generation. Genesis 6:18 – 7:1* God's instruction to Noah was to physically build the ark and physically bring his family and the animals into the ark. God's covenant with Noah was that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood: *I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.” And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Genesis 9: 9-13.* The rainbow was a physical sign men could see with their physical eyes and be encouraged that God cared for them and was looking after them and in turn He wanted men to acknowledge Him.

The second covenant God made was with Abraham. It was that He would make him the father of many nations, and the sign of the covenant between them was that Abraham be circumcised along with every male person in his household and every male member of his family after him: *I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.” Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. Genesis 17: 7-11.* Again, this was a physical promise (the possession of the land of Canaan) and the sign of the covenant was for them to be physically circumcised. God wanted them to be continually reminded that they were to be holy and set apart from the heathen nations around them.

God's third covenant with men was after He freed His people (Abraham's descendants), from slavery in Egypt. He had Moses physically lead them through the desert, where there was no food to eat or water to drink. There God fed them with manna from heaven and gave them water that flowed out of a rock. He did this to demonstrate his power and mercy to them so that they would learn to trust in Him only. Through Moses God gave the people His covenant. This promise was to give them the new land and He would be their God, and they would be His holy people. Then He proclaimed the commandments of the covenant to Moses. The ten commandments were physically written down on two physical tablets of stone. The stone tablets were then placed into a physical ark built of acacia wood: *When Moses went*

and told the people all the LORD'S words and laws, they responded with one voice, "Everything the LORD has said we will do." Moses then wrote down everything the LORD had said. He got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the LORD. Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and the other half he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, "We will do everything the LORD has said; we will obey." Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words." Exodus 24; 3-8

God has revealed to me that all of these first covenants with mankind were physical covenants. All of these physical covenants (promises) required all the people who agreed with the covenants to worship God with a Physical worship. Notice that Moses physically built an altar at the foot of the mountain and physically set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young Israelite men, and they physically offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the LORD. Moses took half of the blood and he physically sprinkled the blood on the altar. He sprinkled the other half of the blood on the people. All of these physical sacrifices and offerings was a requirement by God in His old covenant with His people. It was required so that the people would humble themselves and fully acknowledge Him in their hearts, and obey the commandments that He had physically written down on the physical stone tablets. Looking back, we know that all these physical acts foreshadowed the spiritual requirements of God's new spiritual covenant.

These physical burnt offerings, sacrifices and sprinkling of blood on the alter continued for hundreds of years after that. The problem was that all of these things became for them just rituals and traditions without changing their internal wickedness. They believed if they just carried out all of these physical requirements, that would be enough, indeed that would be all they would need to do to please God. God sent many prophets to warn the people to change their wicked hearts, but they stoned the prophets sent to them instead of changing their hearts: *The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them through his messengers again and again, because he had pity on his people and on his dwelling place. But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the LORD was aroused against his people and there was no remedy.* 2 Chronicles 36; 15-16. God also sent the prophet Hosea to the people, and he told them: *For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.* Hosea 6; 6.

Just as every physical thing God has created will one day pass away, His physical covenant He made with mankind also had it's ending. This is why God sent his only Son who lived with Him in heaven down to this earth to introduce a new spiritual covenant with mankind. This spiritual covenant will never pass away, it will last forever: *Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, 'Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God.' First he said, "Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them" (although the law required them to be made). Then he said, "Here I am, I have come to do your will."* He sets aside the first to establish the second. Hebrews 10; 5-9.

A Spiritual Covenant Requires a Spiritual Worship

When Jesus was talking to the Samaritan woman by the well, she asked Him where is the best place to

worship God? She said: “Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. John 4; 19-20. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.” John 4; 23-24. In Jesus statement to the woman, he excluded all physical places to worship like in a temple, a church building or a mountain, but He stressed that true spiritual worship would take place internally in our hearts. Indeed, this is the true spiritual worship God requires in His new covenant.

The writer of Hebrews again quoted the prophecy of Jeremiah when he wrote: *If there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. But God found fault with the people and said: “The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor; or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear. Hebrews 8; 7-13*

The writer of Hebrews wrote his letter sometime after the death and resurrection of Jesus, but before the Jewish temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. We know this because he wrote of Jesus' death in chapter 2, verse 9 and he wrote about earthly priests currently serving in the temple in chapter 8, verses 3-5. God has revealed to me that this was a period of transition between the old and new covenants. During that time period of 20 to 50 years, the old physical covenant that had been in force for thousands of years, was becoming obsolete and the new spiritual covenant was coming into power. After the Jewish temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., the old physical covenant was completely nullified. God has revealed to me that the law itself (the ten commandments) did not and has not changed at all. The only thing that has changed is that instead of being written on physical tablets of stone, the law is now written on the tablet of our hearts. It changed from something physically manifested into something spiritually manifested. Jesus Told us: *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5; 17-19.*

Only the manifestation of the law has changed from a physical thing that was written on a physical rock into a spiritual thing written on our hearts. Jesus was asked by an expert in the law: *“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.’ Matthew 22; 36-40.* This love is spiritual and it comes from within ones self, and it manifests itself outwardly in our dealings toward our fellow man and our God.

But, you may ask what about keeping the sabbath? It is one of the commandments too. How are we expected to keep the sabbath spiritually? God has revealed to me that the sabbath was originally established so that men, women, children, servants and even animals could have a day of physical rest. Jesus said: *“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath”* Mark 2; 27. Now that God's new spiritual covenant has been established, we are expected to spiritually rest in Him every day. Jesus said: *“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Matthew 6; 25-34.* Jesus also said: *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11; 28-30.*

When God had Moses lead Israel out of their slavery in Egypt, He promised to give them a land where they would find rest for their souls. But they did not believe Him and they did not obey the commandments God gave them so God testified through His prophet: *For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, “They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways.” So I declared on oath in my anger, “They shall never enter my rest.” Psalms 95; 10-11.* So the writer of Hebrews tells us: *It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience. Hebrews 4; 6-11.*

Physical Water Baptism VS Spiritual Water Baptism

God's new spiritual covenant has been in force now for almost two thousand years, but many people are still trying to worship God in a physical way through rituals and traditions of men and as we have learned, physical rituals and traditions usually do not change a person's heart.

One of these rituals is water baptism. Please don't get me wrong, I do believe in baptism and I believe that true believers must be baptized to be saved, but I believe that we must now be baptized in the spiritual water of His Holy Spirit and not the physical water of this earth. Another ritual and tradition is that of communion or the “Lords Supper”. God has revealed to me that there are true spiritual counterparts to these physical rituals and traditions.

I was baptized with water when I was 12 years old, but I did not understand the significance of what I was doing. I thought then, just as most Christians still think, that the ritual of water baptism is something God still requires, even though John the Baptist said two thousand years ago, "*I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.*" Matthew 3:11 So I ask, why do we still insist on using physical water to baptize people when He has promised to baptize us in His Holy Spirit? When John the Baptist made that statement, the old physical covenant was still in force. But remember, the old physical covenant used physical things like blood and water to represent the spiritual things to come in the new covenant. When Jesus was teaching at the feast of tabernacles he said: *On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him."* By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. John 7: 37-39

John gave instructions to the people coming to him for baptism to "repent". Repentance means to change one's mind, or to turn and go in a different direction. God has revealed to me that true repentance means to be genuinely sorry for the life one has lead up to that point and to ask Him for forgiveness. Even more, it is to promise to obey him and begin to live for Him and not for ourself. To be more specific, true repentance is to die (internally) to our physical nature. That physical nature has been in control of our life up until that point. We must surrender to His Spirit and ask Him to take over the control our life. Water baptism gives us a picture of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. But instead of making it a physical ritual, it should be done internally before God with a good conscience and a true intent to begin to live for him from then on. With that true intent, He will baptize (immerse) us with His Holy Spirit so that we will be able to carry out the promise we made to Him. Paul explains all this so well: *What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.* Romans 6: 1-14

Peter explained true spiritual baptism in this way: *The water of Noah's flood symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body, but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.* 1st Peter 3: 21-22. The pledge of a good conscience toward God is fulfilled inwardly, to be accepted by God; and not outwardly, to be seen by men. The inward change made in a person's heart after they are baptized by His Holy Spirit, will be manifested outwardly. These are the fruits of the Spirit Paul wrote about: *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.* Galatians 5: 22-23. These spiritual fruits, are what should

be seen by others. Dear Lord Jesus, I pray your Holy Spirit will be manifest in me.

Physical Communion VS Spiritual Communion

When I was growing up in the church, every Sunday toward the end of the service they would say a prayer and pass around a piece of bread and every professing member would take a small piece and eat it. Then they would say another prayer and pass around a cup of wine (grape juice) and each professing member would take a sip. When I became a professing member at 11 years old, I too took part in this communion. They said this ritual was to remember Jesus and the sacrifice he made. The bread represented His body, and the wine represented His blood. I never openly questioned this, but I always wondered how I was expected to remember Him better just by eating that piece of bread and taking that sip of grape juice. It never really sharpened my remembrance of Him or did any thing more for me other than making me feel good inside that I was obeying a ritual that everyone said I should do.

In August of 1978 when I began honestly searching for the truth in God's word, I asked Him for understanding and He began to reveal Himself to me and give me an understanding of the things I was reading about. I read in John's gospel where he testified: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word dwelt with God, and what God was, the Word was* [they were both spirit and they were of the same spirit]. *The Word then was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has never understood it.* John 1:1-5 God revealed to me in these verses that "Jesus is the Word of God," not the physical book I was reading or the pages of the book or the ink used to write the words on the pages, but He is the same word who was with God in the beginning when He said "Let There Be Light" and He is that same word whose spirit was emanating from the book and giving me an understanding of Him and His glorious plan of salvation for me and for all those who believe Him. John continued to write: *There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.* John 1:6-14 When God revealed this to me, I broke down in tears just to think that the same power that created the entire universe was trying to communicate to my spirit through His spirit found only in His Word. I still cry when I think of how much he suffered in order to make that line of communication possible through His Word.

God has revealed to me a marvelous lesson from the exodus of Egypt and how it fits into our walk with Him today. Just as the children of Israel were slaves in Egypt, in the same way, we were slaves to sin. God arranged to lead his people out of their slavery in Egypt and He has arranged to lead us out of our slavery of sin. He lead His people to the sea and told them to go through the sea. They were sure to die if they tried, but He made a way through for them and they came out alive on the other side. In the same way He leads us to the water of His Holy Spirit where He tells us we must die to self. He covers us in the water of His Holy Spirit where we are re-born into a new spiritual life. In this new life, our spirits will never die. After His people came out of the water He lead them into a barren wilderness

where there was no food or water. He did that so they would learn to depend only on Him for their food and water. He gave them manna every morning. The manna fell to the ground like dew on the grass. If they wanted to eat, each one of them had to get up early in the morning, before the sun grew hot to gather the manna, because if they waited too long, the sun would get hot and melt the manna away. They were only allowed to gather enough manna for themselves. They could not gather more than enough for one day, (with the exception of the sixth day) or it would rot. If someone decided to sleep in late, they would go hungry all day. *Exodus 16: 11-21* Likewise, after we are spiritually re-born, He leaves us in this world (likened to being in the wilderness). When we begin our new spiritual life, He feeds us the manna of His word. The only way our spirit can grow and mature is by eating God's word. And just like they had to get up early to gather the manna, we also must get up early every morning to eat His Word and pray to Him before the cares of the day take hold of us. If we wait too long, like the sun getting hot, the spiritual manna will disappear and we will be spiritually hungry all day. God quenched their thirst by splitting open the rock and water gushed out. In the same way He quenches our thirst for understanding by giving us the water of His Holy Spirit to teach us. We are to learn from their living example, that: *It is not by physical bread we are nourished, but it is by God's Word that those of us who trust in Him are nourished and sustained. That substance, that fire did not destroy, simply melted away when warmed by the sun's first rays, to teach us that we must rise before the sun to give Him thanks by praying to Him, and by eating His Word as the daylight dawns. The hope of the ungrateful will melt like the hoarfrost of winter, and drain away like water that runs to waste. Wisdom 16: 26-28*

When Jesus taught on this subject of eating His Words, He explained the difference between eating physical manna (bread) and spiritual manna (His Words) He said: *"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."* *John 6:35* Later on He taught them saying: *I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."* *Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever."* *John 6: 48-58* Here, Jesus is clearly teaching the difference between physical bread that will sustain our physical bodies and the spiritual bread that sustains our spiritual life in Him. If we believe that He is God's Word it only follows that we must eat His flesh (eat His Words) and drink His blood (used to cleanse us from the defilement of our sins). Many of Jesus followers left Him when they heard Him say these things but He explained it all in just five verses later when He told them: *"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life."* *John 6:63*

Jesus is pleading with us: *"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."* *Revelation 3: 20*

**Physical Resurrection
VS
Spiritual Resurrection**

I know that many Christians are taught that we will be given a new physical body when we are resurrected from the grave. But God has revealed to me that this is not true. Our soul is our spiritual body and our spirit is housed within our soul. Our soul and spirit have the potential to live forever. When Jesus baptizes us with the water of his holy spirit, our spirit laying dormant within our physical body will become alive forever. After death, our physical bodies will disintegrate in the grave, while our souls will go on to be with the Lord. Jesus testified about this in many places. He said: *My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*" John 6:40 Jesus also said: "*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.* John 11: 25-26 By this, He is teaching that our soul and spirit will live even though our physical body dies. Once our spirit is alive, it will never die.

To back up what I said about our soul is our spiritual body, the Apostle John was shown heaven in a vision: *When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.* Revelation 6: 9-11 Also in Revelation it says: *I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God.* Revelation 20:4 All of these souls that John saw did not have physical bodies attached to them. Their physical bodies were slain and some were beheaded. What John saw was their spiritual bodies, their souls.

Paul is most clear when he talks about the type of body we will have in the resurrection: *So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.* So it is written: "*The first man Adam became a living being*" the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. *The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."* 1 Corinthians 15: 42-54

Those who never put their faith, hope and trust in Jesus have a soul and spirit within their physical body also, but their spirits will remain dormant within their physical bodies until after they die. After that, God will raise the souls of all the dead, both the righteous and the wicked to face His judgment. Daniel Prophesied about this: *Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.* Daniel 12: 2 Jesus also taught this: *A time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.* John 5: 28-29 When Paul defended his case before Felix the governor, he testified about this also: *I have the same hope in God as these men, that*

there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. Acts 24; 15

Revelation gives a small glimpse of what God's judgment will be like: *Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. Revelation 20; 11-15* These verses describe the dead standing before the throne to be judged by God. These are not a bunch of dead physical bodies standing before God, their physical bodies were probably long ago disintegrated in the earth. These are the souls of those who once were alive on the earth and their physical bodies have died. It describes how the books were opened, and how they will be judged by what they had done while living on the earth. And what they had done will determine what book their name will be written into, either the book of life where they will live forever, or the book of death. *The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.* The fire will burn forever, and this fire is the second death.

Everyone whether they are righteous or wicked will die once. That is, their physical body will die. But those who led a wicked life, whose spirits never came alive in the water of the Holy Spirit, will not have their names recorded in God's book of life. They will experience the second death where their soul and spirit will be annihilated forever. God has revealed to me that the second death is the most painful death. Much more painful than we could ever imagine. But after that, their soul and spirit will be no more, because the second death is final and forever.

Physical Teaching VS Spiritual Teaching

God has revealed to me that when we are reborn into our new spiritual life, our spirit begins its life in much the same way our physical body began its life in the womb, very small. The example that Jesus gave in Matthew 13: 31-32, was like that of a small seed. Since that seed is a spiritual seed, it must have spiritual food and water for proper healthy growth. God's Word is the only spiritual food that will nourish it and His Holy Spirit is the only spiritual water that can teach it, and quench its thirst for understanding. The Holy Spirit knows at what stage of growth the small seed planted in us is in. He knows not to feed us steak when we can only digest milk and He knows the proper quantity to feed us, and He gives it to us at the precise time we are willing and spiritually mature enough to receive it.

Contrast the way the Holy Spirit teaches us, to the way most Christians are being taught by other men today. Could any of us live, if we only gave our bodies food once a week? Or could we grow and become strong if we ate only once or twice a week? As a newborn in Christ, needing only milk, could we survive if we were fed meat? Or, after we mature, could we grow stronger if we were only given milk? The pastor of a Church of twenty, and up to thousands of congregants, has no way of knowing the different stages of growth that each person in his congregation is in. Being only a man, it is impossible for him to give them all, the right food, in the correct amount, at the proper time.

For the most part, people today depend on other men to teach them, and give them an understanding about God. This is why there are so many different religions, religious organizations, and denominations in the world today,

and each one claims to be teaching the truth. The Lord speaking through Jeremiah said; “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD. He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. ”But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought, and never fails to bear fruit. ”

Jeremiah 17; 5-8

Jesus said: “I do not accept praise from men, but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe if you accept praise from one another; yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God? John 5; 41-44 Jesus also said: They loved the praise of other men more than the praise that comes from God. John 12; 43 Jesus quoted Isaiah when He said: “You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men ” Matthew 15; 7-9

Paul is writing about this present day when he wrote: “The time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. ” 2nd Timothy 4; 3-4

Jesus said: “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him? Luke 11; 9-13 In saying this, He is telling us to go to His Word and ask Him for the understanding of it. God will immerse us with His Holy Spirit to teach us about Himself, His kingdom and His plan of salvation for us and the entire world.

Jesus told us; “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water. John 4; 10 This Living Water is the Holy Spirit, Jesus also said: “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. “By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. John 7; 38-39 Jesus told his disciples (and us) about this great teacher who was coming: “The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. John 14; 26 Jesus also said: ”when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. John 16; 13-14

In those days, Jesus sent out his disciples into the entire world to preach the gospel, and to teach people about God. This was absolutely necessary for that period of time, because none of the New Testament was written yet. In fact, everything Jesus taught and preached, His disciples also taught and preached, and after Jesus was resurrected, the Holy Spirit reminded them everything that Jesus taught them. This is how all of the New Testament writings came to be written. No person today, has the authority to add to it, or take anything away from it. *I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.* Revelation 22; 18-19

The night before Jesus was crucified, He prayed for His disciples: “*My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.*” *John 17: 20-26*

In this present day, almost every one either has, or has access to what has been written. All we need to do is have enough faith in God to ask Him, like innocent children, for the understanding of His Word, and at the same time promise to obey Him (from our hearts) as He gives us understanding.

It is a wonderful thing that He has hidden, and sealed the understanding of His Word from all those who are not willing to believe and obey Him. Jesus said: “*I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.* *Matthew 11: 25-26*

Men today are trying to usurp the place of the Holy Spirit, by taking on the job of teaching others the Word of God. The apostle John warns us about these misguided teachers: “*I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.* *1st John 2: 26-27*” We remain in Him, just as Jesus teaches us in John 15; by eating His Words, and learning and growing through Him.

The apostle John also says that people in general, only listen to other people, in order to learn about God. They do not bother to go directly to God's word to learn about Him. He writes: *They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.* *1st John 4: 5-6*

After 70 to 100 AD all of the gospels, and letters of God's new testament had been written, and the Revelation had been given to John, but none of it had been gathered together and compiled into a book yet. But now, almost two thousand years later, the book of God's new spiritual covenant is finished. It is written in almost every language known to man, and it has been distributed throughout the world. Yet, the common knowledge of today is, “if you want to know something about God and His Word, you will need to find someone to teach you,” and the world does not have a short supply of teachers.

Remember the promise of God's new spiritual covenant: “*This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,*” declares the *LORD*. “*I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the *LORD*, ' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,*” declares the *LORD*. *Jeremiah 31: 33-34*

The Holy Spirit has revealed to me, through reading Jeremiah's prophesy and reading the testimony of others throughout God's Word; that God's ultimate goal for every one who is honestly searching for Truth, would be for them to have enough faith in Him to go directly to His Word, ask Him for understanding, repent, and promise Him obedience. Obedience is the key that will unlock the revelation of God's Word. The Word has been given to us by God, and it has cost Him the suffering, and the blood of all of his servants, even that of His own Son. This

is what gives the Word its awesome power. *The Word of God is alive and active. It cuts more keenly than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the place where life and spirit, joints and marrow, divide. It sifts the purposes and thoughts of the heart. There is nothing in creation that can hide from Him; everything lies uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of the One with whom we have to give account.* Hebrews 4; 12-13 Even though we are now living in the days when it is not necessary for us to teach one another about God, we can look around us and see that many people are seeking the glory for themselves by trying to take the place of the Holy Spirit.

God has revealed to me that it was for this reason He prevented Moses from entering into the Promised Land. Many people teach that Moses disobeyed God by striking the Rock, when God told him to speak to the Rock to give water to His people. But that was not so. There were two occasions where God gave His people Water from the Rock. In The first occasion God said to Moses: *"I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink. "So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel.* Exodus 17; 6 Notice that God commanded him to "strike the Rock" in this first occasion. The second occasion says: *The LORD said to Moses, "Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink. "So Moses took the staff from the LORD'S presence, just as he commanded him. He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock? Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank. But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.* Numbers 20: 7-12 It did not dishonor God that Moses struck the Rock twice, because God had already commanded him to strike the Rock on the first occasion. What dishonored God was that Moses tried to get the glory for himself and Aaron when he said; "Must we bring you water out of this rock? " He would have given the glory to God if he had said: "Look you rebels, put your faith in God, He will even give you water out of this Rock".

It seems like most of the religious leaders of today, of all faiths, are trying to give people the understanding of God and His Word out of themselves, and they want to get all of the glory for it.

Isaiah prophesied about our time when he said: *"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.*

Isaiah 55:1-3

Those of us who know Him must understand that God's ultimate plan is that every one who is honestly searching for Truth, will go directly to His Word, eat the manna He has provided for us, and drink from the spiritual rock. We should be earnestly working, and praying for that goal to be realized. This is when God's will, will finally be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven.

This was the prayer Jesus prayed on the night before he was crucified. He prayed to His Father in Heaven: *"Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.* John 17; 1-3

There is no other way in heaven, on earth, or under the earth to truly "know Him" who is real, except that He reveals Himself to us, through His Word. He has planned this from the very beginning, and His plan is perfect. And so it was, and is, and it shall be forever and ever. Amen.